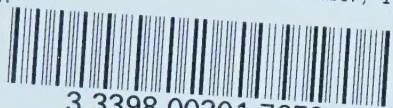


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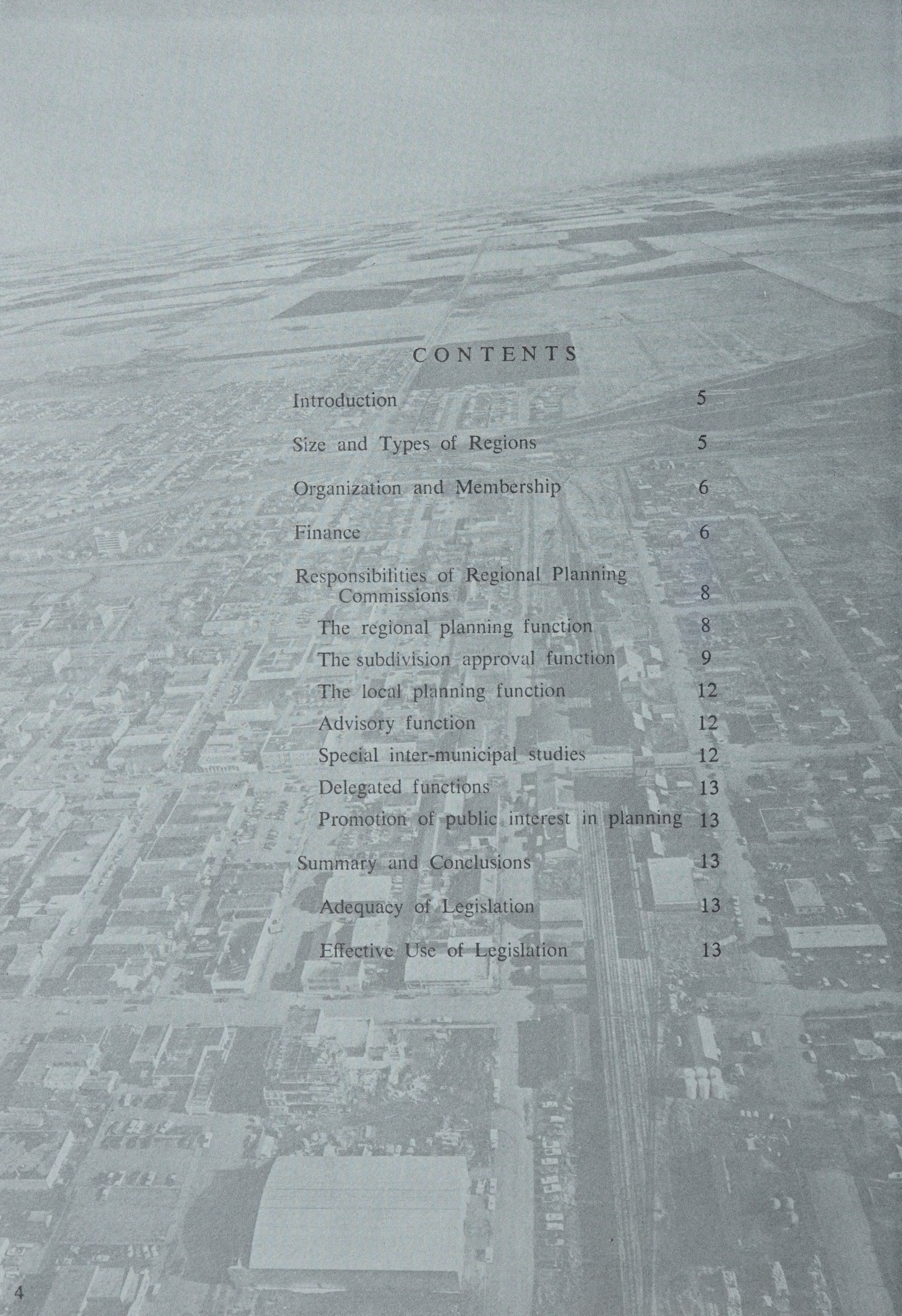
the role of regional planning

Some of the great advances in human understanding have occurred when someone has questioned what everyone knows to be true.

FOREWORD

The Task Force on Urbanization and the Future has established a number of Task Committees to examine aspects of urbanization which are of concern to the people of Alberta. Two of these task committees, in the Peace River area and in Southern Alberta, are examining the role and effectiveness of regional planning. This publication is intended to provide background information for these committees and to raise pertinent questions. Its purpose essentially is to summarize the state of the debate on this matter, at this point in time.

November 1971

An aerial photograph of a city, likely New York City, showing a dense grid of streets and buildings. A large body of water, possibly a river or harbor, is visible in the upper left. A major highway or expressway runs diagonally through the lower right portion of the image. The overall tone is sepia or aged black and white.

CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Size and Types of Regions	5
Organization and Membership	6
Finance	6
Responsibilities of Regional Planning Commissions	8
The regional planning function	8
The subdivision approval function	9
The local planning function	12
Advisory function	12
Special inter-municipal studies	12
Delegated functions	13
Promotion of public interest in planning	13
Summary and Conclusions	13
Adequacy of Legislation	13
Effective Use of Legislation	13

THE ROLE OF REGIONAL PLANNING IN ALBERTA

The trend to establishing regional agencies, responsible for planning or development of a number of municipalities, is apparent across Canada. There is a growing emphasis on regionalism in every province. Problems refuse to confine themselves to original municipal boundaries; programs are often more economical when put into effect across an area larger than any one municipality.

For instance, in the rapidly expanding metropolitan areas the effects of growth are felt at least as far as the distance considered to be acceptable for commuting. This distance usually extends well beyond the boundaries of any one municipality. It is appropriate then to consider certain aspects of land use, utilities, transportation, pollution, taxation, etc., across the whole "metropolitan region", and to establish agencies capable of planning the whole region.

But it is not just within the fast growing metropolitan areas that the regional approach is seen to be useful. The federal and provincial governments in dealing with declining communities have also established as the basis for their plans and programs regions covering a number of municipalities. Characteristically, such "development regions" attempt to co-ordinate not only efforts of the city, town and rural municipalities involved but as well the various federal and provincial programs and policies which affect the area.

And even in those areas facing neither dramatic growth nor decline the regional approach to planning and administration is being tried as a useful means of dealing with certain types of problems.

Like the other provinces in Canada, Alberta has been trying its own experiments in regionalism. Most importantly, this province has established over the past 20 years, under planning legislation, seven regional planning commissions. It is the purpose of this pamphlet to discuss the experience of regional planning in Alberta and to raise questions which the task committees on regional planning effectiveness may want to consider.

The emphasis is on regional planning commissions because it is these bodies which cross municipal boundaries and provincial departmental lines. While each department of the provincial government has its own regional approach, and while there have been established from time to time ad hoc regions for developmental purposes (like the Slave Lake special area designated by the Federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion) these isolated approaches to regionalism are considered in this pamphlet only insofar as they relate to the ongoing and co-ordinating responsibilities of the regional planning commissions.

It is the commissions which are responsible for providing a coherent framework for the activities of public agencies and private development.

In the following pages we will consider the kinds of regions that have been established in Alberta, the responsibilities of the Regional Planning Commissions and their opportunity to be effective in terms of these responsibilities.

SIZE AND TYPES OF REGIONS

Just what are defined as regions in Alberta has been determined not so much by a formal analysis of the geographic components of Alberta's economy, municipal structure, social patterns, transportation routes, etc., as by the municipalities themselves indicating where they have common problems with other municipalities. The commissions grew, as municipalities possessing common problems formed and joined them.

As the number of commissions increased and the need arose, the Province recommended boundary limits for each. In this way, seven regions have been established to date in Alberta, covering 57.7% of the area of the province and 86.4% of the population. These are centered on the cities of Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Calgary, Red Deer, Wetaskiwin/Camrose, Edmonton and Grande Prairie/Peace River. (See page 7). Given the location of these cities, and both location of the boundaries and extent of the areas, the regions might justifiably be called "city-centered" regions. The fact that all the presently established regions tend to be "city-centered" might explain in part the absence of such a commission in the settled area east and north east of Edmonton. (It should be noted that outside the boundaries of the established regions the Provincial Planning Branch is responsible for the planning functions.)

There are questions which arise due to the differing characteristics of the established regions. There is an indication that different types of studies, of staff, of regional plans, and perhaps even organization may be required. The regions based on the very rapidly expanding metropolitan cities of Edmonton and Calgary are in the main faced with the problems of regulating and channeling rapid and dispersed growth. Other of the regions are based on cities experiencing little if any growth. The major approach here may be essentially one of stimulating growth and the orientation is more one of development and public entrepreneurship, than regulation.

The Peace River Region poses a third different set of circumstances, as a growing frontier/resource region, and may require yet another variation in organization and planning approach.

There has been some concern about the boundaries of certain commissions. The location of the boundaries of the Battle River and Edmonton commissions have been questioned, and in the north the vastness of the Peace River Region has to some suggested it might better be considered two regions — the city centered and the resource/frontier. What is of equal significance, however, is the need to recognize the greatly different planning requirements of the different regions.

ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP

The co-ordinating function of the Commission is achieved through a membership which includes representatives of municipalities and provincial departments. For example the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission membership includes the City of Edmonton, 4 counties, 1 municipal district, 10 towns, 10 villages and the Provincial Departments of Highways, Education and Agriculture. In every Commission, simple majority votes are taken on most matters but a two-thirds vote of the members is required for approval of the preliminary regional or regional plan. Appeals to the Provincial Planning Board on any decision taken by a Commission are provided for, but these may be made only by a municipality or public authority where a preliminary regional or regional plan is at issue.

(The Provincial Planning Board is composed of 15 senior civil servants representing 8 departments of the Provincial Government. (See page 16). In addition to its role as an appeal body on subdivision and regional plans, the Provincial Planning Board is responsible for advising the Lieutenant-Governor in Council with respect to the establishment, operation and financing of Regional Planning Commissions, and for the approval of regional plans. Membership, voting power and appeal procedure have periodically been matters for municipal-provincial discussion and have been modified through time.)

The question of membership has involved the issue of whether it should be voluntary or mandatory. Although the Provincial Government has the authority under the Planning Act to make membership mandatory, in practice membership has been on a voluntary basis. The major areas of development in the Province have come under commission planning responsibility in this voluntary manner, and few municipalities have withdrawn from Commissions after joining. Apparently for these reasons the province has not exercised its powers to impose mandatory membership.

Two recent changes in the legislation increase the probability that municipalities will belong to a Regional Commission. One states that the Commission is a subdivision approving

authority both for its members and non-members within the regional planning area. The second establishes an Alberta planning fund for financing planning, so that all municipalities within a regional planning area contribute to its operation. This involves members and non-members.

With regard to voting power the provision up to 1970 that a city could have 3 members and other municipalities one, resulted in some extreme departures from representation by population (e.g. an urban member representing 150,000 people had equal voting power to a regional village member representing 400).

In the past this has been less of a contentious issue than one would suppose. However, as the commissions proceed with regional plan implementation, which will involve major issues, the voting power issue may assume greater importance. The 1971 changes in legislation do permit the Minister to determine representation in a commission, so that adjustments can be made, if problems arise, without amendment to the Act.

FINANCE

The Commissions are not taxing authorities and have, until 1970, depended on the contributions of their municipal membership and the provincial government. It should be noted that over the years both the municipal and provincial government have agreed to increasingly larger contributions to support the Commissions.

Amendments to the Planning Legislation in 1971 have resulted in greater standardization of contributions to Commissions and in greater security in their budgeting. The formula establishes a global provincial fund to which municipalities, according to their population, contribute. Edmonton and Calgary (i.e. the "urban municipalities with over 100,000 population") contribute only 0.05 mills, as they have their own planning department. Other municipalities contribute on a sliding scale from 0.10 mills for rural municipalities to 0.45 mills for an urban place with 20,000 to 100,000 population. The Province contributes 1.5 of the total amount contributed by municipalities.

It is not clear at this time to what extent this will affect budgets. However, the size of staff of the Commissions quite clearly influences the degree to which they can fulfill their role. When one examines the responsibilities assigned to the Commissions (which include preparing the regional plan—the major job—the role of subdivision approving authority, and the role of planning agency for individual municipalities in the region) and compares this with the relatively small staff available, the question arises whether some of these responsibilities are being carried out at the expense of others.



It is apparent that the Province has taken an evolutionary approach to regional planning, and has shown a willingness to increase its support and make adjustments to improve their operation. This has been equally true of the increasing responsibilities assigned to the commissions, whether in relation to the regional plan, to regional land use, or to subdivision of land.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

The responsibilities of the Commissions are defined by the Planning Act. An examination of these responsibilities in some detail, in terms of both legislative provisions and current practice is necessary when evaluating the current state of regional planning in Alberta. Such an examination should produce insight into whether such impediments as exist to effective planning are due to legislative constraints, or other reasons.

The Commission functions can usefully be discussed under a number of headings:

- (a) regional planning function
- (b) subdivision approval function
- (c) local planning function
- (d) advisory function
- (e) special inter-municipal studies
- (f) delegated functions
- (g) promotion of public interest in planning

The Regional Planning Function

Despite the wide range of responsibilities, the central function of the Commissions, and their main reason for being, is the formulation of regional planning policies and the implementation of a regional plan.

Any discussion on the role of the Commissions should examine such questions as: what are the objectives, the form, and the content of a regional plan? How does it relate to the provincial and municipal planning function? How effective are the designated methods for implementation of the plan?

Some of the answers to these questions are provided by an examination of the legislation and its provisions and by an examination of the work underway by the Commissions in the preparation of their *preliminary* regional plans.

The Planning Act contains the following general guidelines for the preparation of regional plans:

- that it shall be prepared by qualified personnel,
- that it shall be prepared on the basis of studies of land use, population, economic base, transportation and communication, public services, social services and such other factors relevant to the plan,
- that the plan shall include a map showing permitted land use or densities or both, proposals relating to highways, public

- roadways, services, public buildings, schools, parks and recreation areas,
- that it shall contain a program relating to staging and financing and programming of public development, and may include proposals to facilitate the development of industrial enterprises adapted to the economic base,
- that once the plan is approved each public authority within the region shall refrain from taking any action or undertaking any work that is inconsistent with the plan.

It is apparent that the legislation is comprehensive in the functions it includes within the purview of the plan, that it is broad and general enough to permit variations in its planning approach to meet the needs of diverse regions, and that it provides powers to make the plan effective. There is however, one significant aspect concerning regional plans which is not clearly dealt with in the legislation; this is the matter of provincial policy guidelines within which the plans will be prepared.

It is apparent even from population figures (see page 10) that some of our regions are experiencing explosive growth while others are virtually stationary or have portions which are in decline. Whether these trends should be used as the basis of the regional plans, or whether broader provincial policies to modify these trends are to be the basis for regional planning, is of significance to all Regional Planning commissions.

A more detailed example is transportation. The regional plan is concerned with the highway system, the paved rural road system, the urban freeway and rapid transit, and resource roads. Here again it is of importance in terms of the various regional plans whether provincial priorities have been established among these in pursuit of broad provincial objectives.

The question is really whether planning should be viewed as a rational adjustment to inevitable change or as an instrument of change. In the absence of provincial objectives, regional planning is apt to play primarily an adjusting role because basic decisions regarding such matters as nature of the province wide transportation grid, aid to declining communities, etc., (i.e. those decisions which most strongly affect the nature of a region) must be made by the Province.

Parenthetically, it might be of value to have a co-ordination of data collection on a regional level between the Province and the Commissions. Such information as population, net migration, employment levels, income levels and private investment, etc., are not now readily available on a regional level. The work now being done by the Provincial Planning Branch on the Whitecourt Study offers possibilities if extended on a provincial basis.

Given that the provincial policy guidelines are in process of clarification the question still arises as to the sort of document the regional plan will be. Will it be a broad policy document or an enlarged version of a city general plan? Will the details concentrate on a short term investment program? What aspects of regional investment will it be concerned with?

Since no regional plan has as yet been implemented in the province, indications of the approaches may be obtained from those preliminary regional plans approved, and of the work underway on regional plans. Two other sources are of value to indicate potential direction: one is the Regional Rural Road Studies, which were a provincial-regional-municipal endeavour, and the Peers-Whitecourt study which has recently been completed and which deals with regional analysis and policies for non-urban land use.

The two preliminary regional plans in force (in Edmonton and Calgary) are essentially interim policies to control land use or densities and to keep options open until such time as a regional plan is prepared. In this context they have been of value. For example the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission's policy on metropolitan ravines and river valleys has proved of the greatest importance. However these preliminary plans are not essentially indicators of the kind of plan which will emerge.

The work of the Peace River Regional Planning Commission with its comprehensive surveys to establish plan objectives, and its initial work on policies for the urban service structure for the region indicate a broad policy framework for the plan, with only certain elements of the region being subject to detailed planning and control.

Another example of approaches to the regional plan are the Regional Rural Road Studies which were carried out in all the Commissions simultaneously in 1967. They illustrate the clear definition of responsibility as between the province, the region and the municipality, and they were carried out with an agreed approach on the types and units of information and standards. They assumed a certain sum of provincial and municipal investment and they permitted the planning of a co-ordinated system as between municipalities and between regions. This approach is therefore worth close examination.

It would appear that the nature of the regional plans for Alberta have not been irrevocably fixed, and that it would be beneficial to have greater public discussion and clarification at this time.

Since no plans have as yet been completed, a discussion on implementation could be considered premature. It is probable that the implementation procedures will be modified and

evolve as the plans are put to the test. One aspect however is worth noting. The regional park and open space system is the responsibility neither of the municipal nor of provincial agencies, and the commissions at present are not in a position to act in land acquisition and development. A very good case could be made that this is a matter of immediate concern. A useful publication which touches on a number of these points is the "Report on the Functions and Activities of the Red Deer Regional Planning Commission 1952-1969".

There are a number of recent studies from other provinces which are also of interest in relation to an improved information base, or to provincial policy guidelines or to content and approach to regional plans. The work of the Regional Development Branch of the Department of the Treasury in Ontario, and the recent Regional Analysis Study in Manitoba are both useful indicators of the kind of provincial information base which may prove of great value to regional planning. Similarly, the 1970 publication of the Ontario Government, "Design For Development - the Toronto Centred Region", reveals one approach to providing provincial guidelines for regional plans.

A number of recent regional planning studies are available to indicate the range of approaches: the Regional Development Concept plan for the Oshawa area, the "East-Man" Regional Development Study, the Mactaquac Regional Development Plan and so on. Some of the approaches may or may not be appropriate to the Province of Alberta or to the different regions. They do have value as background information in formulating our own approaches to the preparation of regional plans.

The importance that the Provincial Government has placed on completion of the preliminary plans and regional plans is underlined by amendments to the Planning Act which state that the preliminary regional plans shall be completed by January 1, 1972.

There is no doubt that the regional plan has great potential for co-ordinating inter-municipal and provincial policies. The power it confers on the Commissions to shape the development of the Region does not seem to be widely realized.

Subdivision Approval Function

The delegation of the subdivision approval function of the Province to the Commissions contains a number of inherent advantages in terms of efficiency, convenience to the public and regional planning.

The nature of the subdivision process which involves site inspection, discussions with applicants, and evaluation of effects on adjoining parcels and on the municipal plan, suggests that the subdivision approval functions should be handled on a decentralized basis, within a framework of provincial regulations.

DATA SHEET

ALBERTA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

<i>Regional Planning Commission</i>	<i>Date of Estb.</i>	<i>1971 Budget re (3)</i>	<i>Regional Population 1961</i>	<i>Regional Population 1971</i>	<i>Number of Staff</i>
Edmonton Regional Planning Commission	1950	\$156,500	388,047	538,733	4 profess. 6 others
Calgary Regional Planning Commission	1951	\$159,423	306,973	454,970	4 profess. 7 others
Oldman Regional Planning Commission	1955	\$183,488	119,198	116,491	5 profess. 6 others
Medicine Hat Regional Planning Commission	1954	\$ 90,000	49,505	45,500	2 profess. 6 others
Red Deer Regional Planning Commission	1952	\$204,142	91,978	103,134	6 profess. 9 others
Peace River Regional Planning Commission	1958	\$145,075	68,338	87,078	5 profess. 5 others
Battle River Regional Planning Commission	1960	\$ 79,225	58,754	59,714	3 profess. 3 others

<i>Population Growth 1961-71</i>	<i>Percent Urban 1971 re (1)</i>	<i>Preliminary Regional Plan</i>	<i>Regional Plan</i>	<i>Area of Planning Commission</i>	<i>Number of Member Municipalities including I.D.'s re (2)</i>	
+150,685	90.2%	Completed	Partially Completed	5,000 sq. mi.	26	(0)
+147,987	89%	Completed	Partially Completed	10,600 sq. mi.	14	(17)
— 2,707	61.4%	Partially Completed	Partially Completed	10,300 sq. mi.	28	(11)
— 4,005	62.5%	Partially Completed	Partially Completed	10,500 sq. mi.	11	(5)
+ 11,156	46.7%	Partially Completed	Approx. 50% Complete	13,416 sq. mi.	27	(9)
+ 18,740	41%	Partially Completed	Partially Completed	85,000 sq. mi.	34	(4)
+ 940	35.8%	Partially Completed	Partially Completed	5,768 sq. mi.	19	(7)

Provincial Planning Branch —responsible for planning in that area of the province which is outside the boundaries of the Regional Planning Commission
—area outside Regional Planning Commission—114,901 sq. mi.
—population outside Regional Planning Commission—221,929
—population within Regional Planning Commissions—1,406,071

re (1)—Urban population includes cities, towns and villages over 1,000.

re (2)—Number in brackets indicates municipalities within the Regional Planning Commission's boundaries but which are not Commission members.

re (3)—Gross Budget includes special projects, contributions by the province and surplus amounts from previous years.

Note re (2) does not include summer villages.

From the point of view of the regional planning commission, direct contact with the subdivision process is of great value. The long term planning possibilities for an area are often determined at the subdivision stage, long before any construction or development occurs. The control of subdivision and therefore population density is one of the important regulatory devices for achieving regional policy.

Questions have been raised from time to time as to whether the subdivision approval authority should not further be decentralized to the municipal level. Since the cities of Edmonton and Calgary are their own subdivision approving authorities, the question arises as to the conditions under which certain other municipalities may be empowered to act in this capacity.

The Local Planning Function

Although all municipalities require technical planning services in many cases the smaller urban, and rural, municipalities may not have the resources, or their size may not justify full time planning staff. By membership in the Commission, and at relatively modest costs, they can avail themselves of the services of the planners on the Commission staff. Although this is not their major role, the Commissions can show positive accomplishments in the field of local planning, and the system in general has worked well. It may be noted that the cities, other than Edmonton and Calgary, utilize the Commission technical staff for the city planning function.

Occasionally, the situation arises where a municipality may have legitimate differences with the regional body on questions of policy. This places a commission planner acting as an advisor to these two bodies in an ambiguous position.

A more general question involves the work priorities of the Commission staff in relation to their various tasks. Since the subdivision approval work and the local planning work involve immediate issues as compared with the longer term issues of the regional plan, the former may well occupy the commission's limited staffs. This is probably an important reason for the apparent slowness in the preparation of regional plans.

Special Inter-Municipal Studies

A substantial number of studies have been completed by Commissions over the years. These include for instance: for the Peace River Region, Objectives of the Regional Plan, and Central Place Study; for the Edmonton Region, The River Valley Study, the Metropolitan Water Supply; for the Battle River, Regional Economic Base Study; the Red Deer Commis-

sion has carried out a series of economic, land use and population studies; the Calgary Commission, Small Holding Study; the Medicine Hat Region, Population Migration Study; and the Oldman River Commission, Service Centre Study.

Many of these have been essential aids in coping with some regional factor reaching problem proportions. In some Commissions, these studies and agreements arrived at by urban, rural and provincial agencies have had a substantial effect on regional development.

Such areas as housing and land costs, regional economic and social development would seem to have been given less emphasis than they would warrant. In this context however, the pioneer work of the Red Deer Regional Planning Commission in developing a program of municipal ownership of land for the expansion of its urban municipalities should be mentioned.

Advisory Function

The Planning Act devotes a special section to the role of the Commission as an advisory body which may submit proposals to the proper authorities on such matters as the adjustment of municipal boundaries, supply of utilities and public services, conservation, pollution, and the location, attraction, development and diversification of industry.

There is value in reviewing this aspect of Commission responsibility since there are at present a number of ambiguities in some of the procedures. For example the annexation procedure is such that the Local Authorities Board may approve an annexation to an urban area, and only later will the regional planning commission deal with the matter of whether it will be zoned for any urban purpose. In part the situation arises due to the absence of a regional plan—since a plan would establish among other things the urban expansion policy. However, even under present circumstances it may be possible to rationalize the process.

A related matter is the possibility that the power of the Commissions may be eroded by the creation of single purpose agencies, such as inter-municipal water authorities, regional industrial development associations, possible regional park authorities, northern development council, etc. As the number increases, the possibility of co-ordinating regional policies becomes more difficult and complex. The question as to whether the Commissions themselves might not evolve into assuming some or many of these functions is worth examining. In this context, the regional districts established in British Columbia are of interest, since they are assuming some of these functions and are evolving into regional governments.

It is also worth examining how effective the Commission is in its role of co-ordinating provincial municipal developments in the region. Only a few of the provincial departments are represented on the Commission, such that even in terms of formal liaison procedures there is a problem for the Regional Planning Commission in relation to most provincial and federal departments and agencies. Moreover, until a regional plan is prepared significant decisions may be made by the Province without reference at all to the regional planning agency. Section 18 of the Planning Act specifically exempts from subdivision or development control by the Regional Planning Commission such utilities as highways, irrigation ditches, pipelines, railways, etc., or "any other thing that the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may determine".

Delegated Functions

According to Section 13 of the Planning Act the Council of a municipality represented on a regional planning commission may delegate to the Commission the function of administering the provisions or part of the provisions of a regional plan or development scheme but only when those provisions are determined by the Commission to be of common concern to two or more municipalities represented on the Commission.

Although this section of the Act permits such extensive delegation of responsibility by the municipality to the Commission, it has remained largely inoperative because no regional plans have as yet been implemented and the municipalities by and large have not utilized the development scheme as a planning device.

Promotion of Public Interest in Planning

It is probably true for the larger commissions at any rate, that there is little public awareness of the nature and functions of the regional planning commission. This may be due to a number of reasons. The members of the Commissions are not directly elected and therefore the Commission does not come before the public periodically on election issues. (Indeed, because of the presence of provincial members on the Commission it is often not clearly understood that it is an inter-municipal organization and not a provincial board.) Even where preliminary regional plans are in effect, amendments may be proposed only by municipalities and not by individuals, so that direct public contact is small.

Greater public awareness may be of value both from the point of view of the Commission and from the point of view of the citizens of the region. The value of the plan depends on the degree to which it can practically meet the varied needs and aspirations of the people of the area. These are not always self evident and

considerable dialogue may be required. In addition sound regional planning proposals may falter due to limited public support, arising from a lack of awareness.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This review indicates the wide scope of responsibility which has been assigned to the regional planning commissions by provincial legislation. It also indicates that the regional plan, once approved, becomes a powerful instrument to co-ordinate and influence municipal, provincial and private development in the region. Under present legislation, however, the commission, without a regional plan loses a good deal of its planning potential.

It is possible that where commissions have lacked effectiveness this is due to basic deficiencies in the regional planning system and in legislation. But this is difficult to assess since no regional plan has yet been prepared.

Given the framework of the present legislation, two major issues emerge for each commission: the need to define more clearly the scope and content of a regional plan, and the need to determine by what means its preparation can be expedited. There are, in addition, other issues which would benefit from wider debate and greater public awareness. These include questions which involve the effective use of present legislation or the adequacy of that legislation.

Adequacy of Legislation

Is the commission arrangement equally effective for expanding, declining or frontier regions?

Would regional planning effectiveness be increased by commissions having a development or public works function in addition to their planning role?

Is increased commission responsibility a useful alternative to creating single purpose regional agencies? (e.g. for industrial development, water supply, solid waste disposal, libraries, etc.)

Does the system of membership and voting rights present existing or potential problems in commission operation?

Are the legislative provisions adequate for the commissions to perform their role of co-ordinating, municipal, provincial and private development?

Is the present appeal procedure satisfactory?

Should the commission framework be expanded to include the regional government functions in order to expedite the implementation of a regional plan?

Effective Use of Present Legislation

What are the main factors delaying the completion of regional plans?

What provincial guidelines are useful or necessary for their preparation?

Should there be a clearer definition of the goals and objectives of regional planning in each region? What will be the scope and content of the plan?

Can a more efficient data or information system be provided by the province and the Commissions to aid in co-ordinating their efforts?

How effective have Commissions been in relation to the social aspects of planning?

What methods can be employed to achieve wider participation in the regional planning process?

The Task Committees now established on Regional Planning Effectiveness provide for wide participation, both in seeking answers to these kinds of questions, and in developing broad acceptance for the answers found.



APPENDIX - CONTENTS

1. Members Provincial Planning Board
2. Provincial Government Representatives on Regional Planning Commissions
3. Excerpts from the Alberta Planning Act relevant to Regional Planning Commissions and Regional Plans
4. Alberta References, Regional Planning
5. General References - Regional Planning

MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCIAL PLANNING BOARD PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Assistant Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Provincial Planning Director of Municipal Affairs, Director of Technical Division, of Lands and Forests, Supervisor of Special Land Uses, of Lands and Forests, Director of School Administration, Department of Education, Head of

Horticulture Branch, Department of Agriculture, Chief Engineer, Water Resources Branch, Department of Agriculture, Chief Engineer of Highways and Transport Director of Surveys of Highways and Transport and Surveyor to the Edmonton Land Titles Office, Department of the Attorney-General.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT MEMBERSHIP ON REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

Battle River Regional Planning Commission—

Departments of Agriculture, Highways and Transport, Education, I.D. Administrator, Lands and Forests.

Calgary Regional Planning Commission—

Departments of Agriculture, Education, Highways and Transport, Lands and Forests, I.D. Administrator.

Edmonton Regional Planning Commission—

Departments of Highways and Transport, Education, Agriculture.

Medicine Hat Regional Planning Commission—

Departments of Highways and Transport, Agriculture, Environment, I.D. Administrator, Lands and Forests.

Oldman River Regional Planning Commission—

Departments of Highways and Transport, Environment, Agriculture, I.D. Administrator.

Peace River Regional Planning Commission—

Departments of Highways and Transport, Lands and Forests, Agriculture, 5 I.D. Administrators.

Red Deer Regional Planning Commission—

Departments of Highways and Transport, Agriculture, I.D. Administrator.

LEGISLATION CONCERNING REGIONAL PLANNING

EXCERPTS FROM THE
ALBERTA PLANNING ACT
(CHAPTER 43 OF THE STATUTES OF ALBERTA)
WITH AMENDMENTS TO 1971

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

Regional Planning Commission

8. The Lieutenant Governor in Council, by order, may establish a regional planning commission and may provide for

- (a) the name to be given to the commission,
- (b) the municipalities that are to be represented on the commission,
- (c) the addition or withdrawal of a municipality to or from the commission,
- (d) the area, to be known as the regional planning area, within which the commission may exercise its powers,
- (e) the alteration of the area of the regional planning area, and
- (f) the proportion in which the funds required to meet the annual expenses of the commission are to be contributed by the Province and by the municipalities represented on the commission or by the municipalities situated in the regional planning area which are not represented on the commission.

(1963, c. 43, ss. 9, 10; 1969, c. 86, s. 2; 1970, c. 89, s. 3)

Memberships

9. (1) A regional planning commission may be composed of such number of members to be appointed in such manner as may be determined by order of the Minister.

(2) Each municipality situated in a regional planning area may be represented by one member of the municipal council to be appointed by the council who may attend the organizational meeting and the annual general meeting of the regional planning commission.

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the representative appointed by the municipal council pursuant to subsection (2) and not appointed to the commission may attend any meeting of the commission at which an item of business of a planning nature affecting his municipality is to be dealt with by the commission and the representative may speak to and vote on the matter before the commission as if he were a member.

Financial Year

10. (1) The financial year of a regional planning commission is the 12-month period beginning on January 1st in each year.

(2) On or before April 1st in each year, a regional planning commission shall submit to the municipalities situated in the regional planning area and to the Board

- (a) a report on its operations and activities during the preceding financial year concerning regional planning, municipal planning, subdivision approvals and any major developments, projects or transactions that have required the attention of the commission, and
- (b) in such standard form as the Board may prescribe, a statement of the income and expenditures and assets and liabilities of the commission for the preceding financial year.

(1963, c. 43, s. 10; 1969, c. 86, s. 2)

Alberta Planning Fund

11. (1) The Minister shall establish a fund to be known as the Alberta Planning Fund.

(2) The Lieutenant Governor in Council shall, by May 15, 1971 and by February 28 in each year thereafter, or as soon thereafter as possible,

- (a) establish rates expressed in mills, not exceeding in any case the rate of one mill, and
- (b) prescribe different classes of municipalities to which the different rates are applicable.

(3) Each municipality shall pay into the Fund annually a sum equal to the amount which results from applying the applicable mill rate established pursuant to subsection (2) to the equalized assessment

of the municipality as established for the year under The Municipalities Assessment and Equalization Act.

(4) The Minister shall advise each municipality by May 30, 1971 and by March 31 in each year thereafter, or as soon as possible thereafter, of the amount it is required to pay into the Fund.

(5) Each municipality shall pay the amount required of it on or before the first day of June of each year.

(6) In default by any municipality of the payment of the amount required of it, the Minister may require the Provincial Treasurer to withhold any moneys payable by the Province until the amount owing by the municipality is paid.

(7) There shall be paid from the Fund to each regional planning commission such sums as may be authorized by order of the Board together with grants as authorized by the Legislature sufficient to meet the operating costs of the regional planning commission.

(8) Any surplus accruing to the Fund at the end of the fiscal year shall remain in the Fund and be available for use in the following year.

Delegation of duties

13. The council of a municipality represented on a regional planning commission may delegate to the commission the function of administering the provisions or part of the provisions of a regional plan or development scheme but only when those provisions are determined by the commission to be of common concern to two or more municipalities represented on the commission.

(1963, c. 43, s. 13)

Functions of regional planning commission

14. (1) The functions of a regional planning commission are

- (a) to study the resources and development of the regional planning area, with a view to preparing a regional plan,
 - (b) to prepare a preliminary regional plan for the purposes of development control during the period of preparation of a regional plan,
 - (c) to advise and assist the council of any municipality situated within the regional planning area
 - (i) in the planning of orderly and economical development of the municipality, and
 - (ii) on matters affecting the planning of orderly and economical development that are of common concern to the municipality and any other municipality or the Province,
 - (d) when so requested, to prepare and recommend to the council of any municipality represented on the commission all or any of the following:
 - (i) a general plan;
 - (ii) a development control by-law;
 - (iii) a zoning by-law;
 - (iv) a development scheme; and
 - (e) to promote public interest in the planning of orderly and economical development of the regional planning area.
- (2) A regional planning commission
- (a) may appoint such planning officers and other employees and such consultants as the commission considers necessary for its purposes,
 - (b) may expend the funds furnished to it by the municipalities represented on the commission and by the Province for any of the purposes of the commission,
 - (c) shall exercise such rights and powers and perform such duties relating to the planning and control of development that are
 - (i) vested in it by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, or
 - (ii) assigned to it by order of the Board in connection with the administration of

The Subdivision and Transfer Regulations made under this Act, or

- (iii) delegated to it by resolution of the council of a municipality represented on the commission,
- (d) may appoint standing or special advisory committees consisting of not less than three of its members and may delegate to any such committee
 - (i) any matter for consideration and inquiry, and
 - (ii) any of the duties and powers conferred upon the commission by this Act, and
- (e) may delegate to its director the authority to approve applications to subdivide only when the application conforms in every respect with the requirements of The Subdivision and Transfer Regulations and with the provisions of any preliminary regional plan, regional plan or general plan that may be in effect.

(3) The Lieutenant Governor in Council, upon the advice of the Board, may make regulations to be known as the Regional Planning Commission Regulations for the purpose of

- (a) governing the operations of a regional planning commission, the holding of its meetings and the transaction of its business, and
- (b) regulating the salaries, pensions, leave and other terms of service of persons employed by a regional planning commission.

(1963, c. 43, s. 14; 1968, c. 77, s. 3;
1970, c. 89, s. 4)

REGIONAL PLANS

Adoption of regional plan

67. A regional planning commission, by a vote of a majority of not less than two-thirds of the municipalities represented on the commission, may resolve to prepare and adopt a regional plan for the whole or such parts of the regional planning area as are specified in the resolution. (1963, c. 43, s. 67)

Advisory powers

68. A commission, whether it has adopted or resolved to prepare and adopt a regional plan or not, may at the request of a municipality situated in the regional planning area study and submit to the proper authorities concerned proposals relating to

- (a) the adjustment of boundaries between municipalities and the annexation of territory by or the amalgamation of municipalities,
- (b) the supply of water and the provision of sewerage facilities or other public services within the regional planning area,
- (c) the conservation of natural resources, the prevention of pollution of streams, the control of flooding and the utilization of land and resources within the regional planning area, and
- (d) the location, attraction, development, diversification and dispersal of industry within the regional planning area.

(1963, c. 43, s. 68; 1968, c. 77, s. 7)

Preparation of regional plan

69. A regional plan

- (a) shall be prepared under the direction of qualified planning officers or qualified planning consultants who shall be appointed by and be responsible to the commission,
- (b) shall be prepared on the basis of surveys and studies of land use, population growth, the economic base of the regional planning area, its transportation and communication needs, public services, social services and such other factors as are relevant to the preparation of a regional plan,

(c) shall include

- (i) a map showing the division of all or part of the land in the regional planning area into areas of permitted land use classes or permitted densities of population, or both as the commission considers necessary for the purposes of the regional plan,
 - (ii) a schedule prescribing the uses of lands and buildings or population densities, or both to be permitted within each of those areas,
 - (iii) proposals relating to the provision of highways, public roadways, services, public buildings, schools, parks and recreation areas and the reservation of land for these purposes,
 - (iv) a schedule setting out the sequence in which specified areas of land may be developed or re-developed and in which the public services and facilities referred to in subclause (iii) should be provided, and
 - (v) proposals relating to the financing and programming of public development projects and capital works to be undertaken by the municipalities or other public authorities having jurisdiction within the regional planning area, and
- (d) may include
- (i) proposals to facilitate the development of industrial enterprises especially adapted to the economic base and resources of the regional planning area, and
 - (ii) such written statements, reports, charts and drawings as may be necessary to express and illustrate the proposals contained in the regional plan.

(1963, c. 43, s. 69; 1969, c. 86, s. 8)

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Development control

70. Where a commission resolves to prepare and adopt a regional plan, each council having jurisdiction over any part of the regional planning area to which the regional plan is to apply shall

- (a) exercise control over development in accordance with the terms of any existing development control by-law or zoning by-law enacted under Part 4, or
- (b) in the absence of such a by-law, apply to the Minister for authority to exercise development control in the manner provided by Part 4.

(1963, c. 43, s. 70; 1965, c. 70, s. 14)

Preliminary regional plan

71. (1) A commission shall prepare a preliminary regional plan for the whole of the regional planning area, and development within the area may be governed by the exercise of development control or by adopting a zoning by-law.

(2) A preliminary regional plan shall be completed in its entirety before January 1st, 1972, or such further time as may be prescribed by the Board.

(1963, c. 43, s. 71; 1968, c. 77, s. 8)

PRELIMINARY REGIONAL PLANS

Contents of preliminary regional plan

72. A preliminary regional plan shall consist of

- (a) a map showing the regional area or part thereof divided into such areas of permitted land use classes or permitted densities of population, or both as the commission considers necessary for the purposes of the preliminary regional plan, and
- (b) a schedule prescribing the uses of lands and buildings or population densities, or both, per-

mitted within each area in the same manner as may be prescribed in a zoning by-law, and may include general proposals for the development and improvement of public roadways in the regional planning area.

(1963, c. 43, s. 72; 1969, c. 86, s. 9)

Vote on adoption

73. A preliminary regional plan shall not be adopted except upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting upon the resolution.

(1963, c. 43, s. 73)

ADOPTION OF REGIONAL OR PRELIMINARY REGIONAL PLANS

Adoption of plans

74. (1) A commission may adopt a preliminary regional plan or provisionally adopt a regional plan at any meeting only if

- (a) at least 30 days' notice of motion to adopt the proposed plan has been given by a member at or before the preceding meeting of the commission, and
- (b) the commission, upon receipt of the notice of motion, has sent a copy of it, together with a copy of the proposed plan to the council of each municipality and to each public authority having jurisdiction in the regional planning area.

(2) A preliminary regional plan, as originally prepared or as amended, may be adopted only after the commission has considered any representations with respect to the plan that are submitted to it by the public authorities mentioned in subsection (1), clause (b) within six weeks from the date on which copies of the proposed plan were sent to them.

(1963, c. 43, s. 74; 1965, c. 70, s. 15)

Notice of intended confirmation

75. (1) When a proposed regional plan is provisionally adopted, the commission shall give notice thereof and of its intention to confirm the plan by publishing

- (a) in a prominent position in one or more newspapers circulating in the regional planning area, and
- (b) on at least two occasions,

a notice of intended confirmation of the plan.

(2) The notice of intended confirmation of the proposed regional plan shall state

- (a) the principal features of the plan and a summary of its contents,
- (b) the place or places within the regional planning area, one of which shall be the office of the commission, where a copy of the plan may be inspected by the public during reasonable hours, and
- (c) that representations by property owners and other interested persons will be heard by the commission upon a date to be stated in the notice, not less than 30 days from the date of the first publication of the notice.

(1963, c. 43, s. 75)

Public hearing

76. (1) The commission shall hold a public hearing and as soon as possible thereafter shall meet to consider the representations that have been made and may

- (a) make such amendments to the proposed regional plan as it considers advisable in view of the representations, and
- (b) confirm the regional plan as advertised or as amended by subsequent advertisement.

(2) A regional plan shall not be confirmed except upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting upon the resolution.

(1963, c. 43, s. 76)

Copies of plans

77. (1) Upon a regional plan being confirmed or a preliminary regional plan being adopted, the commission shall send a notice of the confirmation or adoption to each council and to the Board.

(2) The commission shall furnish copies of the regional plan or the preliminary regional plan

(a) to the Board in such number as the Board may require, and

(b) to each council in the number of one copy for every councillor and two additional copies.

(3) The commission shall make available for sale to the public copies of the regional plan or preliminary regional plan at such reasonable prices as may be set by the commission.

(1963, c. 43, s. 77)

Effective date

78. A regional plan and a preliminary regional plan comes into effect upon being approved by the Board.

(1963, c. 43, s. 78)

Zoning by-law affecting plan

79. When a preliminary regional plan or a regional plan comes into effect the council of every municipality situated in the regional planning area shall

(a) forthwith enact and maintain in effect a development control by-law or a zoning by-law to give effect to the preliminary regional plan or the regional plan, and

(b) take immediate action to amend any general plan previously adopted under Part 4 or any by-law affecting the land within the municipality so that they are consistent with and give effect to the provisions of the preliminary regional plan or regional plan.

(1963, c. 43, s. 79; 1969, c. 86, s. 10; 1970, c. 89, s. 10)

Notice to public authority

80. (1) When a regional plan comes into effect the commission shall give notice thereof to any public authority having jurisdiction within the regional planning area.

(2) Upon receiving a notice in accordance with subsection (1), each public authority having jurisdiction within the regional planning area shall thenceforth refrain from enacting any by-law, taking any action, or undertaking any work or any construction project that conflicts with or is inconsistent with the regional plan.

(3) A public authority has the same right of appeal to the Board as a council has under section 85, clauses (a) and (b) and is governed by the decision of the Board accordingly.

(1963, c. 43, s. 80)

Exemption from advertising

81. Notwithstanding section 130, a zoning by-law passed by a council pursuant to section 79 need not be advertised nor need the council hold any public hearing in connection therewith when the Director certifies that the provisions of the by-law are for the purpose only of implementing the provisions of a regional plan that have already been advertised.

(1963, c. 43, s. 81)

AMENDMENT OF REGIONAL PLANS AND PRELIMINARY REGIONAL PLANS

Amendment of plans

82. (1) A council may submit to a commission a written request for an amendment to a regional plan or a preliminary regional plan, together with a statement of the particulars of the proposed amendment and the reason the amendment is requested.

(2) A commission may of its own motion propose an amendment to a regional plan or preliminary regional plan.

(1963, c. 43, s. 82; 1965, c. 70, s. 16; 1970, c. 89, s. 11)

Review of plans

83. Each commission that has adopted a regional plan or a preliminary regional plan shall at intervals of five years thereafter completely review the plan and may amend or amplify the regional plan or the preliminary regional plan as it considers necessary, subject to the right of any council to appeal to the Board against any amendment or amplification or any refusal by the commission to adopt any proposed amendment or amplification. (1963, c. 43, s. 83)

Amendment of plans

84. The provisions of this Part respecting the adoption, advertising, confirmation, approval, passage or coming into effect of

- (a) a preliminary regional plan or a regional plan, or
 - (b) a development control by-law or a zoning by-law,
- apply *mutatis mutandis* to the amendment of such a plan or by-law. (1963, c. 43, s. 84)

APPEALS

Appeal by council to Board

85. A council may appeal to the Board a decision of the commission

- (a) confirming a regional plan or adopting a preliminary regional plan or any part thereof, or
 - (b) refusing to adopt or confirm an amendment to a regional plan or a preliminary regional plan proposed by the council, or
 - (c) made under section 93 and referring to a dispute to which the council is a party.
- (1963, c. 43, s. 85)

Appeal by commission to Board

86. A commission may appeal to the Board where

- (a) a council has not passed a by-law required to implement a regional plan or preliminary regional plan, or
- (b) a development control by-law or a zoning by-law passed by a council does not properly implement a regional plan or a preliminary regional plan, or
- (c) a public authority has taken an action or undertaken a public work contrary to, inconsistent with or at variance from a regional plan or a preliminary regional plan, or
- (d) a council fails to administer its zoning and other by-laws in a manner consistent with a regional plan or a preliminary regional plan or administers its zoning and other by-laws in a manner that causes or will cause an inconsistency with or a variation from a regional plan or a preliminary regional plan.

(1963, c. 43, s. 86)

Procedure on appeal

87. (1) An appeal to the Board, under this Part, shall be submitted in writing to the secretary of the Board and shall state the circumstances and grounds of the appeal.

(2) A copy of the appeal shall be delivered or transmitted by registered mail by the appellant to the office of the commission and the office of any municipality concerned.

(3) The Board, in its sole discretion, may refuse to entertain an appeal that has not been lodged with the secretary of the Board within 60 days of the date of the decision or action that is the subject of an appeal. (1963, c. 43, s. 87)

Hearing of appeal

88. (1) The Board, before deciding an appeal made under this Part, shall hold a hearing on the matter at a convenient place in the regional planning area.

(2) At least 10 days before the date set for the

hearing, the Board shall give notice in writing to all public authorities that it thinks are concerned stating the time and place of the hearing and the subject of the appeal. (1963, c. 43, s. 88)

Powers on appeal

89. The Board, in disposing of an appeal, having regard to this Part, to the general scope and intent of the regional plan or preliminary regional plan, and to the merits and circumstances of the particular case, may

- (a) settle the content of a preliminary regional plan or regional plan and of any by-law made in conformity therewith by a council,
- (b) determine whether a by-law, action or public work of a public authority, as in effect or as proposed, conforms to a preliminary regional plan or a regional plan,
- (c) determine whether a council is conforming to, enforcing, or properly administering a preliminary regional plan or regional plan and the by-laws relevant thereto,
- (d) require a commission to amend a preliminary regional plan or regional plan, and
- (e) require a council to adopt, amend, enforce, or administer a by-law in a manner that will cause conformity with a preliminary regional plan or regional plan. (1963, c. 43, s. 89)

Amendment of by-law, etc., after appeal

90. (1) Where the Board in disposing of an appeal requires a by-law, a preliminary regional plan, or a regional plan to be amended, the amendment shall be deemed to be in full force and effect upon the publication by the Board of its decision, and it is not necessary for the council or the commission, as the case may be, to pass an amending by-law or resolution for the amendment to be fully effective for all purposes; unless the Board otherwise states in its decision.

(2) A public authority shall not take a contemplated action, issue a permit or carry out a public work, whether or not the work has been commenced, when enjoined by the Board from doing so either

- (a) as a result of a decision made by the Board in disposing of an appeal, or
- (b) pending the hearing and determination of an appeal by the Board. (1963, c. 43, s. 90)

GENERAL

Conformity with plan

91. Any zoning by-law, development control by-law, development scheme, general plan, or replanning scheme prepared and adopted or confirmed, and any action taken or powers exercised by a council pursuant to Part 4 shall be in conformity with any preliminary regional plan or any regional plan that is being prepared or has been adopted under this Part and is subject to any conditions or restrictions imposed under this Part. (1963, c. 43, s. 91)

Prohibition re compensation

92. No person is entitled to compensation by reason of the adoption or the carrying out of a provision of a regional plan or a preliminary regional plan. (1963, c. 43, s. 92; 1965, c. 70, s. 17)

Inter-municipal disputes

93. (1) Where the council of a municipality is of the opinion that an action taken by another council under this Act has or may have a detrimental effect within the boundaries of the first municipality, it may refer the matter to the commission whether or not the action is one that comes within the purview of a regional plan or preliminary regional plan.

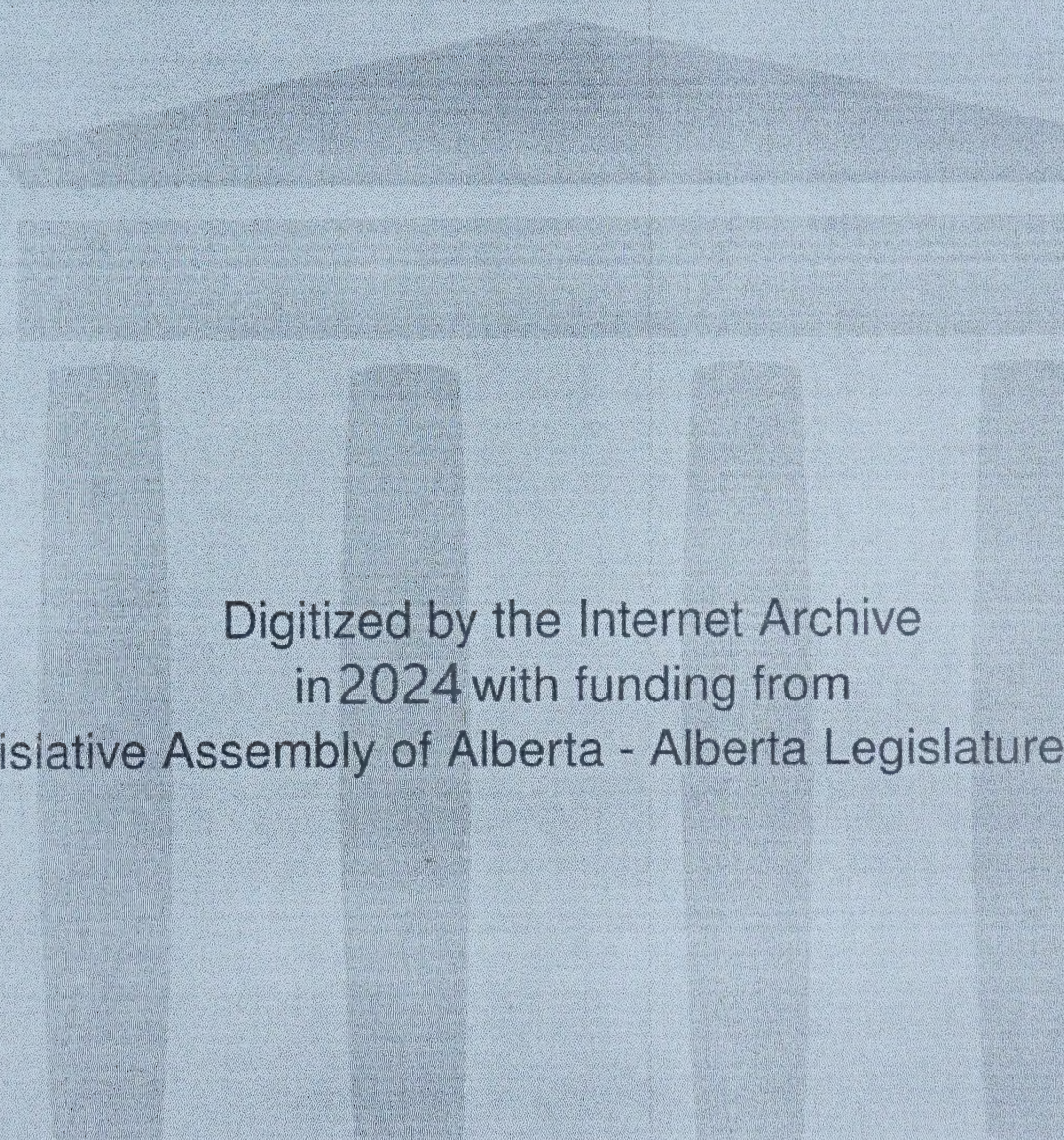
(2) The commission shall decide any matter referred to it under subsection (1) and the decision is binding, subject to the right of either council under section 85 to appeal. (1963, c. 43, s. 93)

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